



Meeting Minutes

Morris • Sussex • Warren Workforce Investment Board

Open Meeting

Date: May 24, 2012

Location: The Farmstead, Lafayette

IN ATTENDANCE:

Members

Marie Betlow (Prime Time Personnel), Anne Marie Brown (Sodexo Senior Services), Olga Burns (Employment & Training Services), Mary Emilius (United Way of Northern New Jersey), Ann Marie Flake (Saint Clare's Health System), David Hollowell (D & D Associates, **WIB Chair**), Karen Kubert (Warren County Department of Human Services), Don Meng (Pack-Ups), Ken Nerbak (Nerbak Jewellers), Terry Newhard (NORWESCAP), Frank Pinto (Morris County Department of Human Services), Ed Rebholz (TheAdmins), Steve Sitek (Novartis Pharmaceuticals).

Guests

Stacy Crosson (Sussex County Technical School), Maureen DiFonzo (Dover Business College), Leslie Drew (Dover One-Stop Career Center), Sean Hendricks (NJ Department of Labor/Workforce Development), Andrew Manganiello (Newton One-Stop Career Center), Irene Schrader (Morris School of Technology), Terry Schweon (Morris County School of Technology), Jessica Southard (Project Self-Sufficiency), Jackie Spinelli (Sussex County One-Stop Career Center), Susan Zellman (Sussex County Board of Chosen Freeholders).

Staff

Jack Patten (**WIB Director**), Sallie Sullivan (Secretary to the WIB Director), Marin Regenthal (Secretary to the ETS Director).

ABSENT:

Members

William Austin, Paul Boudreau, Tammy Case, George Chando, James Dufford, Kenneth Edwards, Rebecca Feldman, David File, David Fiore, Robert Glowacky, Carol Hults, George Krevet, Rosalie Lamonte, Anthony Macerino, Stephen Matthaey, Paul Mazur, Scott McGill, Scott Moffitt, Carol Novrit, Kevin O'Donnell, Robert Peabody, Richard Ricca, Peter Rizzo, Kathleen Serafino, Mary Tucker, Bill Weightman, Ed Yaw.

Prior to the May 24, 2012 Open Meeting, the following documents were posted on the WIB website (www.mswwib.org): January 26, 2012 Open Meeting minutes; April 4, 2012 Disability Committee minutes; April 25, 2012 Literacy Committee minutes; May 1, 2012 One-Stop Career Center Committee minutes; May 11, 2012 Youth Investment Council minutes; the WIB Director report; and the One-Stop Operator report.

Committee Discussions

WIB members and guests visited different stations for each committee and conferred with the chairs and staff on committee and other WIB issues from 9:00 a.m. on. The guests enjoyed the breakfast buffet and opportunity to network with each other and WIB committee chairs, WIB Chair David Hollowell, WIB Director Jack Patten and One-Stop Operator Olga Burns.

WIB Business Meeting

Meeting Opening Remarks

At 9:28 a.m., WIB Chair David Hollowell opened the meeting by reading the Public Meeting Notice and welcoming everyone to the inaugural newly-formatted meeting. After everyone introduced themselves, Chair Hollowell thanked Sussex County Freeholder Susan Zellman for her presence. Freeholder Zellman expressed her appreciation of all the work that the One-Stop Career Centers are doing, and said she had worked with many of those in the room.

Other Business

As Director of Housing Partnership, Freeholder Zellman shared information on a mortgage assistance plan, "The NJ HomeKeeper Program", for people who are underemployed or on unemployment. Eligible homeowners may receive up to \$48,000 in direct mortgage payment assistance for over two years. The Housing Partnership Foreclosure Intervention Center can be reached by telephone at (973) 659-1414 or by e-mail at contact@hpnj.us.

Meeting Topics

Labor Market Discussion

WIB Director Jack Patten introduced the labor market discussion, which was led by WIB business members. Jack said the overall role of the WIB is to advise the One-Stop Career Center system on what is happening in the labor market and where training should be focused.

Marie Betlow of Prime Time Personnel referred to an article which said increasingly more men are employed in occupations traditionally dominated by women. These include administrative support and healthcare. Marie said Prime Time Personnel has placed men in these occupations and expects to do so for the foreseeable future. She also mentioned hiring activity in high-end information technology, and said bio pharma companies are hiring, both operational and technical workers. Jack asked if we should begin to train more males in LPN. Marie said yes. Irene Schrader of Morris County School of Technology asked for suggestions on drawing men in to train for these positions. Marie said it starts with awareness and interest, and there are business models that can assist and guide. When she coaches people, she tells them that not only are they planning for their current job, they are planning for their next job as well. Ken Nerbak also suggested that Irene try reaching out to veterans.

Steve Sitek of Novartis Pharmaceuticals indicated he is very active in the training area. He is also very involved with the American Society for Training & Development (ASTD)¹. This nonprofit works to build a bridge between private and public sectors and strengthen those relationships. They recently met with Jane Oates, US Department of Labor Assistant Secretary of the Employment and Training Administration, to talk about what ASTD has to offer. Many One-Stop customers are becoming involved in ASTD, which is producing a paper this year on skill gaps. Steve noted that the labor shortage reported by some employers is due to gaps between employer requirements and worker skills. A related article can be found at the ASTD website at:

¹ ASTD is the world's largest association dedicated to workplace learning and development professionals.

Anne Marie Brown of Sodexo Senior Services is a noted disability advocate. She reported that Sodexo has been partnering with Morris Knolls High School to obtain volunteers who gain skills while volunteering. She mentioned that Employment Horizons also does training at the Sodexo site. Anne Marie said it is not uncommon for someone who has just been hired to decide they don't like the work and leave shortly after. When a job sample has been done before the hire, they can reduce this turnover, which makes it a win-win for everyone. Sodexo is now working with job coaches from different areas to try to avoid this. The coaches do a work study and background check, and help people decide if the work is something they would like to do. As for other obstacles, they find that a transportation problem is one of their biggest issues.

Don Meng of Pack-Ups said they are a contract packaging company which has recently added picture framing to its services because many of their customers have sent their packaging business to China. Pack-Ups works with some schools and groups, helping them build good work habits. He recently had 25 students come to learn to do chalking, and was pleased to relate that every one of them thanked him for the opportunity. Don also shared that, as a SCORE² counselor at the Sussex County Community College, he's seen problems with loans being cut and people not having enough money to be able to start a business. SCORE counsels people on the importance of having a business plan, but the money is necessary to get started. Don also shared that Newton business owner Jonathan Andrews has created an incubator in his building to encourage the cultivation of small businesses. Small spaces are available at a low rent for three years. Mr. Andrews' building is at 145 Spring Street, and his telephone number is (973) 928-7794.

Ed Rebholz of TheAdmins has three businesses in his family - a 4,000 square foot retail store in Chatham, a venture-funded firm in Parsippany, and an IT company:

- The retail store is closing its doors shortly, partly because of the economy and partly due to the popularity of online shopping. Ed said it is a sign of both the economy and changing patterns. They are sorry to have to lay off five part-time people.
- The venture-funded firm is hiring, and has up to 70 employees. Their employees include highly technical workers and high end sales people. Their product can cost from \$500,000 to \$1 million per device. They are hiring all over the world and now developing in India.
- The IT company, TheAdmins, pays premium wages for difficult to find skills. The staff of six has extensive experience in Citrix (cloud, collaboration, networking and virtualization technologies), VMware (business virtualization infrastructure provider), and Microsoft, and only one of them has a degree. Ed said \$100,000-\$150,000 is there for talented people. Jack mentioned he often hears about soft skills problems with engineers and asked if that was ever an issue for him. Ed indicated that some soft skills are lacking, but they make allowances since some are correctable and some are not. He said getting the right person is challenging. You do need someone who is able to talk; but, in the end, they have to come to the table with knowledge and experience.

Ed said that, in his experience, technology is on fire.

Ken Nerbak of Nerbak Jewellers is a Certified Gemologist, and said his jewelry business was in Hackettstown for 23 years. He spoke of how disheartening it is to see all the empty stores in town, and said he thinks that too many regulations are a big part of the problem now. It makes the cost of doing business prohibitive. Although he continues his jewelry business to this day, Ken left full-time retail in 1990 and went to work for the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development until retiring in 2011.

² SCORE is a nonprofit association dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals through education and mentorship.

Jack asked those who work directly with jobseekers to share their perspective. Sean Hendricks, Account Executive with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD) in the Dover One-Stop Career Center said he deals mainly with employers, and is dealing heavily with local manufacturers right now. Leslie Drew, Senior Employment Counselor with LWD in the Dover One-Stop Career Center said LWD serves highly qualified, highly skilled people. She noted that most of the time, the job orders they receive do not match the highly qualified jobseekers that they serve. Sean agreed, saying there's a misconception that LWD serves mostly lower skilled jobseekers. Andrew Manganiello, Business Representative for Employer Services with LWD in the Newton One-Stop Career Center, also agreed that they serve highly qualified jobseekers. He noted the Franklin PROS office in Sussex County has matched up dozens of jobs paying \$100,000 per year or more, including the Human Resources Manager at ThorLabs. He felt that these types of matches should increase with LWD's recent decision to have a "Job Club" at each One-Stop Career Center.

Presentation - NORWESCAP'S 2011 Poverty Study

Terry Newhard gave an interactive presentation on NORWESCAP's Poverty Study, which included slides on poverty research, demographics and myths. The slides will be available on their website (www.norwescap.org) the week of May 29.

The study identified lack of resources and "the tyranny of the moment" (folks being overwhelmed by the exigencies of their daily lives) as principal contributors to chronic poverty. Other problems included lack of health insurance coverage and education. Some of the changes found since the last poverty study include:

- People are working multiple jobs and still struggling to meet basic needs.
- 10% increase in the number of households that spend over 30% of their income trying to pay for a place to live.
- 40% increase in the number of children receiving NJ Family Care/Medicaid.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.